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**HOUSE MEMORIAL 23**

**46TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2004**

**INTRODUCED BY**

**Jose A. Campos**

**FOR THE HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

**A MEMORIAL**

**REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, THE  
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION AND THE NEW MEXICO CONGRESSIONAL  
DELEGATION TO RECOGNIZE THE SPIRIT 54 ORGANIZATION AND SUPPORT  
ENHANCED FEDERAL FUNDING FOR DEVELOPMENT OF UNITED STATES  
HIGHWAY 54 AS A NATIONAL TRADE CORRIDOR.**

**WHEREAS, transportation officials, local community leaders  
and business leaders in the states of Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas  
and New Mexico have developed the southwest passage initiative  
for regional and interstate transportation (SPIRIT) and are  
working to obtain enhanced federal funding for development of  
United States highway 54 as a national trade corridor; and**

**WHEREAS, United States highway 54 is a major national  
trade corridor that crosses New Mexico for a distance of three**

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1 hundred fifty-six miles, with one hundred thirty-nine miles of  
2 four-lane and two hundred seventeen miles of two-lane roadway;  
3 and

4 WHEREAS, United States highway 54 connects three major  
5 interstate highways, interstate 35, interstate 40 and  
6 interstate 10, and crosses four states; and

7 WHEREAS, United States highway 54 is a natural North  
8 America Free Trade Agreement corridor, beginning at the bridge  
9 of the Americas at El Paso, Texas, the second-busiest United  
10 States border crossing, and running through Kansas City,  
11 allowing travelers to continue to Omaha, Des Moines,  
12 Minneapolis, Chicago and points northeast; and

13 WHEREAS, United States highway 54 serves as a collector  
14 route, intersecting many major corridors such as ports-to-  
15 plains in Texas, and relieving some of the congestion on  
16 interstate 35 and interstate 25; and

17 WHEREAS, United States highway 54 is an important military  
18 route serving Fort Bliss, Holloman air force base, White Sands  
19 missile range, McConnell air force base and major aircraft  
20 plants in Wichita, and providing a connection to Fort Riley;  
21 and

22 WHEREAS, United States highway 54 is a short route from  
23 the southwest to the midwest, saving travelers up to one  
24 hundred eighty miles versus alternate interstate routes; and

25 WHEREAS, United States highway 54 is the most heavily

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1 traveled two-lane highway in the United States, with up to  
2 forty percent of its traffic being heavy commercial traffic;  
3 and

4 WHEREAS, the Kansas department of transportation projects  
5 the route's vehicle count to be sixteen thousand at the Kansas-  
6 Oklahoma state line by the year 2023, with four thousand of  
7 that being heavy commercial vehicles; and

8 WHEREAS, United States highway 54 had the highest accident  
9 count and the most injuries and fatalities of any two-lane  
10 highway in New Mexico during the 1998-2000 period, based on New  
11 Mexico department of transportation statistics, and other  
12 states have experienced similar numbers of accidents with  
13 fatalities on United States highway 54; and

14 WHEREAS, United States 54 from Wichita to El Paso is seven  
15 hundred forty-one miles, including five hundred twenty-three  
16 miles of two-lane and two hundred eighteen miles of four-lane  
17 highway, and the cost of building roads through this area of  
18 the United States is among the lowest in the nation due to fair  
19 weather, the sparsity of rivers, flat terrain and other  
20 favorable features and conditions; and

21 WHEREAS, New Mexico is already enhancing its road  
22 improvement efforts by including funding for the Tularosa to  
23 Santa Rosa segment of United States highway 54 under Governor  
24 Richardson's investment program;

25 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF

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1 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico  
2 department of transportation, the federal highway  
3 administration and the New Mexico congressional delegation be  
4 requested to recognize SPIRIT and support enhanced federal  
5 funding to further develop United States highway 54 as a  
6 national trade corridor, providing for safer, more efficient  
7 transportation of people and goods; saving valuable travel  
8 time, money and lives; and providing important economic  
9 development infrastructure for New Mexico and its sister states  
10 of Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
12 transmitted to the New Mexico secretary of transportation, the  
13 federal highway administration and the members of the New  
14 Mexico congressional delegation.